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ABSTRACT

The major focus of the research is to explore how the implementation stage of two local education authorities (LEA) reorganizations initiatives in England was managed at LEA and school levels. The focus is on what must be done at both of these levels to implement central-government-approved reorganization proposals so as to portray how groups at central government, LEA, and school levels interact in influencing the implementation process. The text explores the longer term consequences for school management once reorganization is over, and it builds up a retrospective account of the earlier proposal-development stage that forms the backdrop to reorganization. The paper is divided into three sections. First, details of the research design are given, and elements of the initial conceptual framework for the study are outlined. Next, selected findings are used to exemplify aspects of the complexity of reorganization initiatives and their implications. The essay concludes with some prescriptions for managers that might help them cope with other kinds of complex changes in other contexts. (RJM)

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Managing Complex Change: Large Scale Reorganisation of Schools

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Introduction

Pawns in a Game

Reorganisation of schooling changes lives. Few planned changes in the field of education can have such a radical (and even terminal) impact on teachers' professional careers, and afford them so little control, as initiatives to reorganise provision of schools throughout a locality. Changing pressures have led to many interventions to reorganise schools in the UK over the years. Earlier initiatives were stimulated by various factors. They included changes in political ideology, as in the creation of comprehensive (nonselective) secondary schools (Ranson 1990) and of three tier systems of first, middle and high schools (Hargreaves 1983) to replace more traditional two tier primary (elementary) and secondary systems; demographic changes in the number of school age children; and the imperative to make savings through removing surplus capacity in school buildings whose maintenance represents a drain on the public purse (Audit Commission, 1988, 1990).

In recent years many local education authorities (LEAs - the equivalent of large school districts, some containing several hundred schools) have mounted reorganisation initiatives in response to increasing pressure from the past Conservative central government to remove a substantial proportion of the estimated 1.5 million surplus pupil (student) places in English schools at the beginning of this decade (DES 1992). The national legislative framework requires that reorganisation initiatives consist of two consecutive stages: first, the drafting of LEA formative proposals, consultation with interested parties in the locality including parents of schools scheduled to change in some way, and the submission of formal proposals to the central government Department for Education and Employment (DFEE); second, implementation in the LEA and its schools of such proposals as win central government approval.

The rationale for these LEA initiatives is to achieve a downsizing of provision to match the supply of school places in the area more closely with current and projected local need, against the backdrop of an overall decline in the school age population. The running costs of a half empty school (including heating, lighting, building maintenance and cleaning) are not much less than those for one that is full to capacity, and a reorganisation initiative that reduces the number of under-used schools and redistributes pupils to fill the smaller number of institutuions that will remain stands to reap substantial long term savings. Redundant school sites can be sold off, an especially lucrative proposition in urban situations where there is pressure on land for development.

The picture is less rosy from the perspective of many school staff (faculty). A minority may gain promotion where a school is scheduled to expand. The majority become caught up in what is potentially a job threatening process of externally imposed change which is more often than not undesired by parents in the neighbourhood, for no reason other than the accident of where they happen to work and the LEA plans for their schools. Most reorganisation initiatives include closures, mergers, and a change in the pupil age range in schools which are to contract or expand. These initiatives cause considerable insecurity and stress for staff (Kyriacou and Harriman 1993; McHugh and Kyle 1993), who may face compulsory redundancy at worst or being pressured to take 'voluntary' premature retirement - if they are old enough - at best. In order to stay in work staff may be forced to seek redeployment to another school, which coming as a shock to the many who have long regarded school teaching as a job for life: once one of the most secure jobs in the UK private and public sectors.

According to a major national survey, by late 1996 over 70% of LEAs in England had undertaken initiatives of varying scope. They, alongside a modest rise in the school age population, were calculated to have resulted in a 50% reduction in surplus secondary and a

40% reduction in surplus primary school places (Audit Commission 1996). The central government policy of removing surplus places has been a quiet revolution to date, attracting relatively little media attention except for local skirmishes during the initiation period when individual schools are first proposed for reorganisation. Compared with the extensive scrutiny that researchers in the UK and elsewhere have given to central government educational reforms since 1988, reorganisation of schooling has been under-researched, with a dearth of studies focusing on their implementation. This situation may have arisen because reorganisation is less self evidently connected with school improvement and effectiveness than the well publicised and researched national reforms affecting curriculum, assessment, instruction and management.

Short Term Strain for Long Term Gain?

Reorganisation initiatives, however, have considerable educational significance. First, they are not merely cost cutting exercises. One explicit aim of LEA initiators is to improve the infrastructure that will survive reorganisation through new building, refurbishment and re-equipping of facilities, so creating more favourable conditions for high quality education; another is more directly to foster educational improvement efforts in the post-reorganisation institutions (Wallace and Pocklington 1998). A less publicised consideration is to seek, where possible, to bring about the necessary reduction in staffing by easing teachers and headteachers (principals) out of the system who have a local reputation of being marginal performers. Initiatives on a large scale can affect hundreds of schools and thousands of their staff for years prior to the reorganisation date and for some years afterwards as staff in the fewer and leaner institutions that emerge from reorganisation come to terms with their new situation.

Second, the reorganisation process may be managed with greater or lesser effectiveness at central government, LEA and school levels, impacting on the morale and work of school staff and so, in turn, on the education of pupils. For the sake of the generation of children who find themselves attending schools which are being reorganised, it is important to get reorganisation right.

Third, reorganisation initiatives on this scale are highly complex and multifaceted, and managing their implementation successfully entails coordinated interaction between - as much as within - education system levels. Patterns that may be identified within this complexity may have wider relevance for our understanding of educational change in the kind of volatile environment of multiple reform that is a feature of so many western countries.

Accordingly, the purposes of this paper are twofold: first, to identify and illustrate key characteristics of reorganisation initiatives by drawing on selected interim findings from our research; and second, to speculate on implications of these contributors to complexity for the management of complex educational change. The major focus of the research is to explore, contemporaneously, how the implementation stage of two LEA reorganisation initiatives in England is managed at LEA and school levels, examining what must be done at LEA and school levels to implement central government approved reorganisation proposals and exploring the longer term consequences for school management once reorganisation is over. A minor focus is to build up a retrospective account of the earlier proposal development stage of these two initiatives which form the backdrop to their implementation. The research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council from January 1996 to September 1998.

It was informed by a pilot study conducted in a different LEA, which examined how three schools merged to become a single institution. This work highlighted how implementation of LEA reorganisation initiatives represents a heavy management burden for headteachers in the period leading up to reorganisation: to close existing institutions and to plan for the start up of the merged institution. A sense of urgency is generated by the need to have all necessary arrangements in place by midnight on the date set for merger. Officially, merger

culminates with this event, but the pilot research indicated that institutionalisation, including promoting identification with the new school and a unified staff culture, has hardly begun at the point of merger, and may take years to bring about (Wallace 1996a). There was also strong evidence of how interaction between central, local and school levels impacted on reorganisation and of the largely negative effect of other policies - some having little to do with reorganisation - originating at levels other than the school (Wallace 1996b).

Arguably, complex change requires sophisticated conceptualisation if regularities in this complexity are to be identified and explained. Existing tools for analysing educational change are only now begining to give strong purchase on complex initiatives of this order of magnitude. Older conceptions of the process of managing educational change based mainly on North American research, whether in the local change (eg Fullan 1991) or the policy implementation tradition (eg Odden 1991), have limited explanatory power for major changes taking place in the context of rapid and radical reform. Their dominant focus on single changes means that they do not take fully into account the multiplicity of other policy changes and ongoing work in each institution forming the context of the change being implemented (Wallace 1991a; Wallace and McMahon 1994). They have also referred to a limited range of changes, mostly in curriculum and instruction (eg Huberman and Miles 1984) or more broadly based improvement efforts (eg Louis and Miles 1990).

Despite the greater promise offered by more recent formulations, whether originating within education (eg Fullan 1993) or outside (eg Beckhard and Harris 1987; Peters 1988; Senge 1990), their authors appear to have moved rather prematurely from acknowledging the increasing pace and scope of change towards prescriptions for managers. In so doing they have sidestepped the task of investigating, as it actually happens, the messy detail of how complex change does unfold in a context of reform, which factors affect efforts to manage implementation, and what prescriptions for managers might arise. The present study is intended as one such investigation, taking this body of work as its starting point and working towards a more detailed understanding of complex change and of management strategies in today's confusing and frequently uncontrollable environment. Here we make a preliminary attempt to identify a (far from exhaustive) list of empirically based characteristics of complexity as a first step along the road to reconceptualisation.

The remainder of the paper is divided into three sections. First, details of the research design are given, and elements of the initial conceptual framework for the study are briefly outlined. Second, selected findings are used to exemplify aspects of the complexity of reorganisation initiatives, and their implications for managing implementation are highlighted. Finally, in conclusion, some prescriptions for managers are tentatively put forward which might have applicability for coping with other kinds of complex changes in other contexts, and we suggest the metaphor of a network as a way of conceptualising the process of complex educational change.

Investigating Reorganisation

Research Design

The research has two main objectives: first, to explore how implementation of large scale initiatives to reorganise schools is managed by staff in LEAs and schools; second, to investigate how groups at central government, LEA and school levels interact in influencing the implementation process. Methods of investigation are qualitative: focused, interpretive case studies (Merriam 1988) informed by techniques of data analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data collection, now complete, was undertaken over almost two years, covering the period leading up to and the aftermath of reorganisation. Case studies have been undertaken in two LEAs and 18 of their schools, the latter reducing to ten as closures and mergers take place (see Table I).

(INSERT TABLE I)

Data sources are termly semi-structured interviews and collection of documents at both LEA level (focusing on management tasks including liaison with those schools being studied) and school level (concentrating on tasks of managing reorganisation and its impact on staff and governors - equivalent to members of school boards in the USA, but each school has its own governing body). Over 300 interviews have been conducted: three quarters with school staff and governors; a fifth with LEA staff and local government councillors; and the remainder with central government civil servants. Research questions were derived from a literature review and the pilot study, to which detailed interview questions related. The interviews were tape recorded. Interview summaries were prepared by referring to interview tapes, fieldnotes, schedules and documents, feeding into site summaries which formed the basis for cross-site analysis. Matrices were developed to display qualitative data, and the data set was also scanned for broad themes and to explore the detail of particular interactions.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical orientation of the study builds on the implementation perspective for single innovations (Fullan 1991), concentrating on implementation and institutionalisation phases, and Fullan's (1993) proposition that a new paradigm for understanding educational change is needed which embraces its 'dynamic complexity'. Change is viewed as involving more factors than managers can take into account, and whose interaction they cannot fully predict, meaning that only limited control is feasible over the change process, especially where innovations are designed at one level for implementation at another. In the spirit of this paradigm, the study seeks to establish patterns in the dynamic complexity of a major change.

Following Kogan (1978), a pluralistic perspective is employed to focus on interaction between individuals and groups in and around the education system, some of whom are more powerful than others (Lindblom 1983). They use such resources as are available to them to realise their perceived interest: some desired state of affairs that will contribute to the fulfilment of their purposes. Some groups form part of the machinery of government, such as civil servants at the DFEE, others belong to 'interest groups', voluntary associations of people with a sectional interest to protect and promote (O'Donnell 1985), like the teacher unions, or an interest in a single issue, such as a self-styled 'action group' of parents set up to resist village school closures proposed in one of the study LEAs (the county). They vary in the formality of their association, from loose networks to professionally staffed organisations, and in their power base.

Depending on the part individuals play in the change process, they may be categorised as change agents, contributing to changes in others' practice, or users, who are expected to implement the change in their own practice. Since reorganisation takes place across system levels, some change agents are also users, as where LEA officials learn new practices entailed in implementing reorganisation proposals (as users) and support headteachers with managing implementation at school level (as change agents). Equally, headteachers may implement changes in, say, staffing (as users) while capitalising on the opportunity that reorganisation presents to foster new developments in curriculum and instruction in post-reorganisation schools (as change agents).

Interaction between individuals and groups is being explored through a combined cultural and political perspective developed in an earlier study of school management (Wallace and Hall 1994) and trialled in the pilot study (Wallace 1996a). It focuses on the questions: who has power to shape the organisational culture, and how does culture shape the use of power? The term culture is defined simply as 'the way we do things around here' (Bower 1966): the beliefs and values about education, management and relationships that are common to members of a group.

Power, following Giddens (1984), implies making things happen: the use of resources to achieve desired ends, whether synergistically as staff work together in the same direction, or antagonistically as they pursue conflicting goals. It may be divided into authority - the use of resources legitimated by beliefs and values about status, including the right to apply sanctions; and influence - the informal use of resources without recourse to sanctions linked to authority, although other sanctions like withdrawing commitment to the reorganisation initiative may be available (Bacharach and Lawler 1980). Governing bodies have exclusive authority under current legislation to appoint staff, yet LEA officials in the study successfully used their influence on governors in schools which would survive reorganisation to persuade them to redeploy staff from schools due to close who would otherwise face compulsory redundancy.

A Complicated Business

We are conscious that our attempt to foreground the complexity of reorganisation initiatives runs the risk of offering an account which borders on the byzantine complexity of the phenomenon itself! What follows, therefore, is an exercise in unashamed reductionism, skating over some of the minutiae of the British education system in the interests of brevity and clarity. Most illustrations are drawn from the case study data from one LEA (the borough) and two of its schools (neighbouring first and middle schools which were to be merged on the middle school site, while the first school site was to be closed).

Multiple Tasks, By Order

The complexity of reorganisation initiatives is rooted in the form of change they constitute. First, reorganisation is not all of a piece, but consists of *disparate implementation tasks*, from reallocating staff to redistributing furniture, dictating very *diverse implementation tasks and longer term changes in practice for particular individuals and groups* in different institutions. Different tasks were required according to the varying content of proposals for particular schools. In the instance of the merger between a first a middle school, the first school was to be prepared for closure; the middle school was to be converted into a primary school incorporating the staff and much furniture and equipment from the first school (but not its site). Refurbishment at the middle school included provision of lavatories and washbasins at a suitable height for younger children, and door closers that were not too stiff for them to open.

The first school had to be cleared of all furniture and equipment, ready for demolition; the middle school received most of this furniture and equipment. Staff changes in the first school were confined largely to the opportunity to be considered for senior appointments in the new primary school; every teacher in the middle school had to apply for a job either in the new primary school being created by the merger or elsewhere, or seek early retirement. In creating the new institution, the headteacher designate (from the first school) had to design a management structure, contribute with governors to a series of decisions from choosing the name of the new school to the appointment of staff, and take the lead in developing all curriculum and other policies for the post-reorganisation institution.

Second, reorganisation is a long drawn out business and many of the varied implementation tasks are *sequential*, meaning that later tasks depend on completing earlier ones. The full sequence of reorganisation activity is punctuated by a series of events which provide fixed points in the overall process driving what may be conceived as a 'critical path' of activity leading up to them. In contrast to the old aphorism that change is a process, not an event (Fullan 1991), reorganisation amounts to an alternating sequence of prescribed process and event. This sequence begins with the initial LEA response to central government requests for information about how the LEA is planning to remove a substantial proportion of its surplus places, and its components span:

1. the development of LEA proposals (process);

2. local publication of these proposals (event);
3. statutory local consultation on proposals (process);
4. LEA submission of revised proposals to central government for approval (event);
5. central government assessment of LEA proposals (process);
6. central government decision and its announcement, allowing implementation to proceed (event);
7. implementation of proposals prior to the scheduled reorganisation date (process);
8. formal completion at midnight on this date (event);
9. subsequent development in schools emerging from reorganisation (process).

Let us focus on implementation tasks (sequential component 7 - process) which must be achieved by the reorganisation date (sequential component 8 - event), imposing a 'critical path' where early completion or slippage can have unintended consequences for subsequent tasks. An example of the knock on effect of early completion in one case study school was where appointing staff well before the reorganisation date gave sufficient time for a few individuals to find another, preferable job before reorganisation, leading to a flurry of last minute appointments immediately before the reorganisation date.

A task prior to the merger discussed above was to make alterations to the middle school building, which was to become the new primary school, by the end of the summer holiday. Several teachers would not be able to move into their classrooms until builders had finished making partitions, laying carpets and mending the roof. The builders started later than scheduled, and a section of the roof began to leak during a heavy thunderstorm towards the end of the holiday, resulting in four classrooms being out of action at the beginning of the new term.

Another, even more crucial task in the run up to reorganisation was to ensure that the destination of all staff was decided before the first and middle schools closed, and to make all appointments to the new primary school before it opened. Decisions could not be made until a temporary governing body responsible for staffing appointments was set up, dependent on the LEA officer responsible for governing bodies. The first task for the newly formed governing body was to select the headteacher designate, so that this person could participate in making the remaining appointments. Here, governors worked hard to make all staffing decisions over a year before reorganisation. They did not dare make the final appointment of a teacher until just before reorganisation because the size of the school budget depended on pupil numbers, and they could not be known accurately very far ahead.

Third, while each reorganisation initiative was conceived in outline as an entity, it was developed and implemented incrementally. The nine-component sequence above was repeated five times over in the borough LEA, planned as five overlapping phases with one group of schools being reorganised each year. The *phased implementation* of reorganisation meant that, by a point in the middle of the implementation period, the first group had been reorganised (sequential component 9), the second was approaching the reorganisation date (sequential component 7), implementation for the third had just begun following receipt of central government approval to go ahead (sequential component 7), consultation on LEA proposals was under way for the fourth (sequential component 3), while proposals for the final group had yet to be drawn up in detail (sequential component 1). In consequence, LEA officials had to deal simultaneously, over several years, with varied tasks connected with diverse parts of the sequence affecting the different groups of schools.

Operating on a Grand Scale

Several characteristics of complexity are connected with the sheer size of the change. First, there is a *large number of players* involved. In the borough LEA, approximately 30 LEA officials played some part in the reorganisation initiative and around 30 locally elected LEA councillors were involved in the consultation stage preceeding implementation. Liaison between LEA officials and central government involved in the order of 20 people at the centre. Overall, the proposals affected from just a few to all of the teaching and support

staff in well over 100 schools catering for tens of thousands of children and parents. Communication between this number of people, in varied localities, was a major management task for LEA officials, governors and headteachers. One reorganising secondary school staff produced a reorganisation newsletter to keep parents informed about progress, especially with new building, prior to reorganisation. The LEA officer who worked on developing proposals liaised very regularly by telephone with members of the central government team of civil servants who would receive the final LEA submission. The latter made a point of visiting the LEA early on, to meet LEA officials and familiarise themselves with the schools.

Second, these players come from a wide range of *groups with differing specialist knowledge and diverse priorities* connected with their sectional interests: from central government civil servants, concerned with the financial commitment that building work connected with reorganisation proposals implied; through LEA councillors, concerned with the impact of proposals on the popularity of the council with voters; LEA officials concerned to ensure that the LEA pledge to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible was honoured; journalists concerned to sniff out areas of controversy over proposals; headteachers concerned with management tasks such as preparing for closure or merger; teachers concerned about their job or early retirement prospects; parents concerned about the distance their child might have to travel to the post-reorganisation school; to pupils concerned over whether they might be parted from their friends or whether their post-reorganisation school would have better facilities.

Specialist knowledge was not always straightforward to communicate between system levels. The LEA architect assumed that school staff would be able to interpret his plan for refurbishment of a science laboratory in a secondary school in our study, but the head of the science department misunderstood the convention for depicting fixed benches and thought they would include underbench cupboards. He found out the hard way when returning from his summer holiday to find that new benches, without cupboards, had been installed.

Where the priorities of individuals and groups who are dependent on each other do not coincide, difficulties can arise. Headteachers' requests for information from the LEA officer responsible for allocation of staff frequently went unanswered for a time as he was very busy with staffing issues affecting many schools, and those elsewhere happened to top his priority list at the time of these requests.

Third, the *interests of members of these diverse groups were not always compatible*, leading to extensive negotiation, compromise and adjustment of implementation plans. Strongest evidence of a struggle between groups with incompatible interests related to the period of public consultation on LEA proposals (sequential component 3 - process). During this time, groups within the local community still had everything to play for, as the LEA proposal for a particular school could potentially be modified or abandoned in the light of the most compelling arguments put forward. According to LEA officials and councillors, despite the flurry of often heated exchanges at the consultation meetings, only minor amendments were made to proposals prior to submission to central government for approval.

A contentious issue emerging during the implementation stage concerned the middle schools in the borough LEA. They were equipped with a computer room which contained enough networked computers for a whole class to use them simultaneously. These schools were to be reorganised in two phases in sequential years. The year before their closure or merger, they did not have a new intake of the youngest pupils. These pupils stayed on in their first school, which was expanding to become primary schools, forming a new year group there. The outcome of this decision, for which middle school headteachers had argued with their first school colleagues and LEA staff, was that the middle schools had substantially fewer pupils for their last year of existence. Headteachers of the first schools had requested that they be sent furniture, textbooks, library books and equipment that were no longer needed in the middle schools but to which the pupils staying on in the first schools were entitled. Existing practice in the first schools was to have one computer in each classroom, rather

than a specialist room, so first school headteachers requested that they be sent the same number of middle school computers as they now had extra classes in the first schools.

The initial response of headteachers of the middle schools was to refuse to give up any of their computers on the grounds that they were all still needed for the remaining classes and educational provision in the final year of their schools' existence must not be compromised. One first school headteacher attempted to influence the situation in her favour by writing a letter of complaint to the LEA chief education officer, who delegated the task of dispensing the wisdom of Solomon to the LEA officer responsible for staffing allocation. He found a middle way, meeting both parties' interests by suggesting that headteachers of middle schools should purchase new computers to replace existing machines which they should pass on to their first school colleagues. Extra money would be found, if the middle school budgets would not stretch far enough, from LEA sources. The end result was that first schools received enough of the oldest middle school machines to have one in each new class, the middle school staff received state of the art machines, and all their computers would be disbursed next year among the primary and secondary schools that would exist after reorganisation.

Individuals required to perform a dual role experienced a personal conflict of interests, since they felt allegiance to two institutions. The acting headteacher of the middle school due to be merged with the first school was succesful in her application for appointment as deputy headteacher (vice principal) designate of the new primary school. From then until the point of merger, she believed that, as acting (temporary - until the merger) headteacher of the middle school, she should protect the interests of her staff and pupils. At the same time she believed she ought to support the headteacher of the first school, who had already been appointed as headteacher designate of the new primary school and had contributed to the governors' decision to appoint her. He was now her boss in this capacity. So she was simultaneously top manager of the middle school in its final year of existence and subordinate to the first school headteacher as deputy designate of the new primary school.

One conflict of interests surfaced over the issue of transferring two computers from the middle school to the first school for the final year before reorganisation. As acting headteacher of the middle school she was concerned to retain the full complement of computers for the specialist room; as deputy designate she felt pressure to comply with the request from the headteacher of the first school for two computers to be used by pupils staying on in the first school instead of being transferred to the middle school.

Fourth, the magnitude of reorganisation produces a *multiplicity of management tasks* at LEA and school levels. Most LEA officials acted as change agents, facilitating implementation at school level, and concentrated on one task area, encompassing the different situations of the schools. Apart from the officer who worked exclusively on preparing proposals and consultation exercises, other reorganisation tasks were undertaken by his colleagues in the context of the rest of their day to day work. Division of tasks among LEA officials included overall responsibility for management resting with the chief education officer, while other officers were separately responsible for specialist tasks like new building and refurbishment, finance, allocation of staff, premature retirement arrangements, moving of furniture and equipment, servicing of governing bodies, and liaison with the media. LEA inspectors took responsibility for providing training and pastoral support for school staff.

Headteachers bore the brunt of implementation at school level, a particularly onerous undertaking for those where radical changes were to take place and they would be responsible for a post-reorganisation institution. Here they acted both as users in respect of their practice and as change agents in relation to other staff. The headteacher of the first school who was appointed as headteacher designate had previously put considerable energy into making a case for the merger to take place on the first school site, which he had lost. He then had to apply for the post of headteacher designate and prepare for a competitive interview. In the period of about 18 months from his appointment as headteacher designate

up to the reorganisation date of the new primary school to be created, he shouldered a double workload, being responsible for managing the closure of the first school and planning the new primary school, on top of his normal daily routine as a headteacher. In the aftermath of reorganisation, he led the process of developing the new school. His major management tasks are listed in Table 2.

(INSERT TABLE 2)

Fifth, in consequence of the range of tasks to be tackled at any time and the ordering of tasks leading up to each fixed point, those centrally involved in managing implementation have to cope with a continually *evolving profile of simultaneous management tasks at different stages*. As one task is completed, another arises, while yet others remain on the agenda over a long period. No sooner had this headteacher completed the appointment of the deputy headteacher designate when the need to make other staff appointments came to the fore, while consideration of what refurbishment of the middle school building was required remained a live issue for many months. Everyone with a major part to play in managing implementation was faced with the *meta task* of juggling with several management tasks at onece: an iterative process of monitoring, planning and decision making to implement this profile of tasks, whose characteristics frequently changed, predictably or unpredictably, within a wider context which itself might frequently and sometimes unpredictably change.

Multilevel Integration

The nature and scope of reorganisation initiatives and the national legislative framework necessitated, first, that there must be a *flow of interaction within and between system levels*. Major tasks for each individual with central responsibility for managing implementation, based at whichever level, were intrinsically bound up with the actions of others at the same and different levels. A major component of the LEA implementation strategy was to allocate *specialist responsibilities to key LEA officials to facilitate cross-level communication*. Means of communicating were a mixture of two way face to face and telephone contact, and one way, via letters, newsletters and faxes.

The education officer in the borough LEA responsible for particular groups of schools was primarily, but not exclusively, a change agent supporting the reallocation of staff, trying to find jobs for those from schools which were due to close in others which were to survive. The overall reduction of 30 schools under the reorganisation initiative meant that as many headteachers, deputies and site managers, and several hundred other teaching and support staff across the LEA had to be shed. Key parameters for his work included: the LEA policy of avoiding compulsory redundancies wherever possible (mentioned earlier), which governing bodies had agreed to support; the recent central government reform of governing bodies giving them exclusive authority over hiring and firing of staff (hitherto an LEA responsibility), meaning that their members were under no compulsion to accede to LEA officials' requests; and national legislation setting out conditions under which individuals might be offered early retirement. He had to rely on his ability to use his influence with governors, and often headteachers, trying to persuading them to take on staff who were being displaced by reorganisation. Other players at LEA and school levels with whom he interacted in achieving this task are listed in Table 3.

(INSERT TABLE 3)

Such cross-level communication tasks were essential to smooth the path of implementation, but interaction between levels was affected by enduring *incompatible interpretations among players at one level of the actions of players at other levels*. Despite extensive communication efforts, there was evidence of a common perception, especially among school staff in closing schools whose jobs were under threat, that staff in other schools and LEA officials did neither fully understand nor cared about their plight. Complaints were rife that LEA officials had acted unfairly. Staff at the first school frequently referred to a promise reportedly made by the LEA chief education officer at a consultation stage meeting

that there would be substantially more money available for refurbishment of the middle school than had proved to be the case. LEA officials were adamant that no precise figure had been given. In addition, central government cutbacks on funding of LEAs since the consultation stage, which could not have been predicted at the time of consultation, had resulted in less money being available then LEA officials had hoped at that time. While LEA officials claimed to have communicated this fact to school staff, their message had not been received. However, school staff felt relatively powerless to act in order to improve the refurbishment allowance, reinforcing the impression that reorganisation was being done to them.

Second, in the face of such perceptions, *power to impact on implementation was dispersed within and between system levels, players being both mutually dependent on and having limited control over each other.* Power was unequally distributed, the reorganisation process being driven by central government pressure on LEAs. Yet, once approval of proposals had been given, implementation was left entirely to LEA officials, with limited monitoring of progress. Central government officials assumed, correctly, that it was in the interest of LEA councillors and officials to implement the proposals. Central government incentives were both negative and positive. A stick was the threat to draw up legally enforcible proposals for the LEA schools within central government if LEA proposals were not forthcoming; carrots included enabling LEAs to borrow money from central government on very favourable terms for new building and refurbishment, and rewarding them for removing surplus pupil places in the annual allocation of central government funds to LEAs.

Negotiations over reallocation of staff illustrate how various groups *worked to find a confluence among their different interests* such that they interacted synergistically in redeploying displaced staff and engineering early retirement agreements. The LEA no longer had the authority to 'slot in' displaced staff to vacant posts, as had been the case in a previous reorganisation a decade before. Teacher union representatives had made it clear that they would take industrial action if their members came under threat, the ensuing disruption to pupils' education possibly turning parents against the reorganisation initiative and deposing the council via the ballot box at the next local council election. Ingredients in the recipe for LEA officials' success were:

- a widespread belief in the authority of the LEA that continued to exist as a legacy from the past, which tended to dispose school staff and governors favourably towards the LEA and so empower its officers when negotiating appointments;
- LEA officials enjoying strong credibility with most headteachers, governors, other staff and union representatives. Officers responsible for staffing had served in the LEA for two decades or more and were highly respected at school level. Their intimate knowledge of local schools and their staff also helped to empower them as they were usually able to put forward staffing proposals which were acceptable to other parties, so sustaining their credibility as a platform for future negotiations;
- the formal agreement reached with all governing bodies, diocesan representatives (from Christian religious authorities involved in the governance of some schools) and unions before implementation began to support the LEA policy of trying to avoid compulsory redundancies;
- LEA influence on governing bodies through the contribution of their LEA nominated governors who were generally willing to toe the party line. To the extent that they had authority to contribute directly to appointment decisions, LEA representatives on governing bodies helped support LEA officers by acting on the advice that they had authority to offer, but governors had no obligation to heed;
- exclusive LEA authority over decisions related to beneficiaries of the early retirement scheme introduced at the outset of the implementation of reorganisation. Early retirement could act as a strong incentive, not only to staff who were eligible, but also to governing bodies who stood to gain through the opportunity it might offer to appoint new staff, to make savings within the school budget by appointing a younger replacement on a lower salary, or to shed a member of staff over whose

competence they were equivocal. Authority over early retirement enabled LEA staff to invite applications from all those eligible in closing schools, and so empowered them substantially to reduce the number of staff whose redeployment they were committed to securing;

- winning of union support through LEA investment in the early retirement package to suit members' interest in maximising their financial compensation, with the added pressure that the present scheme might constitute an unrepeatable offer with a limited shelf life as it would probably be discontinued after reorganisation was over;
- the willingness of LEA staff, headteachers and governors to work synergistically to maximise their influence over the formal decision making procedure. National legislation requires headteacher and deputy posts to be advertised nationally, but does not stipulate how governors should go about shortlisting or interviewing candidates, offering legitimate room to manoeuvre. Staff selection was conducted according to a belief that the letter of the law must be scrupulously followed, but influence was allowable within the parameters the law imposed to reduce the risk of the informal agreement being upset as the procedure unfolded. The advertisement would be worded so as to discourage - but not technically preclude - outsiders from applying;
- LEA authority over other aspects of reorganisation which provided incentives for heads and governors and amounted to an indirect source of influence over staff appointments insofar as they fostered a climate where the LEA was seen to be supportive of school level interests. They included investment in new building and refurbishment and allocation of transition funding discussed above, and provision of LEA training courses suitable for redeployed staff who would be teaching a new age range of pupils.

In sum, LEA staff proved able to wield a combination of influence and authority according to their longstanding culture of professional practice. They nurtured the largely receptive culture among school staff and governors through their part in LEA-school level interaction which empowered them to bring about large scale redeployment, although deprived of their one time authority to make appointment decisions.

Just how intricate the pattern of interaction within and between LEA and school levels could be is indicated by the common LEA officers' strategy to suggest to governors and, as appropriate, headteachers, that an early retirement agreement in one school could be linked with avoidance of redundancy in another. In two instances, a deputy headteacher in an expanding first school applied for early retirement. LEA officers brokered an informal agreement with the headteacher and governors that a teacher in the school would be promoted to the deputy headship which would then fall vacant, and that a teacher under threat of redundancy would be appointed to fill the promoted teacher's place. This agreement was not binding on governors but, should they fail to honour it by, say, opting to appoint a new deputy headteacher from outside the LEA and so severing any tie with avoiding a redundancy, the law governing early retirement meant that the governing body would become liable for financing any enhancement of the pension from their school budget. LEA officers were able to remind governors on occasion of this possibility which acted as a disincentive, encouraging them to keep to the agreement.

Third, because of the multilevel nature of reorganisation initiatives, it is salutory to note that *no-one knew everything that was going on across different levels*: nobody had a monopoly on the big and little pictures. We were in a privileged position, as researchers conducting confidential interviews with individuals working at the different levels, to sample the landscape from each level and to explore how individuals' efforts to operate between levels could result in intended or unintended consequences. While certain key players, such as the LEA officer responsible for developing reorganisation proposals or the central government civil servant responsible for vetting them had a more extensive overview than any headteacher or teacher, they did not have intimate knowledge of implementation at other levels. In common with other multilevel changes in the UK, such

as the introduction of school development planning (Wallace 1991b), individuals at one level had limited awareness of the consequences of their actions at other levels.

Policy Interaction

The turbulence of reform forming the context for the reorganisation initiatives, coupled with the long period required for their development and implementation, meant that they were liable to be *affected by other policies* having little, ostensibly, to do with reorganisation, in ways that often could not have been predicted. The impact of other policies was generally to make more work as *incremental adjustments had to be made* to reorganisation plans so as to accommodate these policies. The variety of interactions between reorganisation and other policies is explored elsewhere (Wallace 1996b; Wallace and Pocklington 1998b), and two examples will suffice here.

One policy jeopardised early retirement agreements on which, as we have seen, LEA officials relied to reduce the number of displaced staff for whom they were committed to finding other employment. In the autumn of 1996, a few months before the reorganisation date of 1st September 1997 for the final phase of schools, central government ministers announced that regulations were to change governing the financing of pensions up to the point when staff taking early retirement reached the age of 60 and were therefore entitled to their full state pension. From April 1997, individual LEAs would have to pay more than hitherto for the years between early retirement and normal retirement age. In financing the reorganisation initiative, LEA councillors had not budgeted for this unforeseeable policy shift, and the LEA could not afford to pay for the remaining early retirements. Yet firm commitments had already been made. In consequence, LEA officials' energy was diverted into making representations to central government ministers, who eventually relented and delayed implementation until September 1997.

Another central government policy added very significantly to the workload and stress level of staff in closing middle schools during the final six months of these institutions' existence. A central government promise made when introducing the reformed national system of school inspections was that, in the four years from autumn 1993, all middle schools in England of the kind in the borough LEA, and all secondary schools, would be inspected by teams employed by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), the agency which had been set up to implement this policy. The headteachers of two middle schools in the borough LEA due to close at the end of August 1997 were notified late in 1996 that the schools would be inspected the following spring, even though they would soon cease to exist and their staff would be dispersed. The system of inspections had been heralded as a means of promoting school improvement, and staff and governors were required to produce an action plan for improving the school's performance in the light of inspectors' judgements. The exercise seemed pointless to staff in the middle schools, since the action plan could refer only to maintaining standards for the remaining few months and to preparing for closure.

OFSTED inspectors insisted that the full procedure must be followed, with the result that preparing for closure was put largely on hold while preparing for the inspection. Both schools received a very positive report, meaning that there was little to put into the action plan which could feasibly be addressed before closure. It served to confirm the view of most staff that their excellent educational provision, which they had worked hard to develop over many years, was about to be destroyed for reasons beyond their control.

Contradictory Elements of Planning

As a complex change, the form of reorganisation, its large size, the multiplicity of system levels it spanned, and its interaction with other policies all combined to make *implementation planning at LEA and school levels highly incremental*. On the other hand, *parameters within which incremental planning took place were largely unchanged* for individual schools once LEA proposals received central government approval and the

reorganisation date was confirmed. Adjustments at one level often depended on information awaited from another, with knock on effects for planning elsewhere. The start date of substantial LEA building work for one middle school due to become part of a split site secondary school could not be fixed by LEA staff until finance was approved by central government. Delay in starting, subsequently compounded by damage caused by the storm during the summer holiday, resulted in contingency plans having to be made and implemented to open the new secondary school site a week late. A new sports hall was not completed until months later, meaning that staff had to make plans to ensure that pupils could not stray onto the building site.

The uneasy juxtaposition of critical path 'lock-step' planning, to known and unmoving deadlines (the events in the sequence highlighted earlier), with incremental planning to respond to unpredictable or uncontrollable aspects of the situation as it unfolds, is consistent with the notion of 'flexible planning' (Wallace 1991c; Wallace and McMahon 1994). This planning approach was found to be forced on school staff in the very turbulent environment of multiple reform, where long term coherence was achieved by lock-step planning, but flexibility to respond to evolving circumstances was also retained by a continual process of reviewing and updating of plans for the short and medium term.

The underlying assumption of flexible planning fits the reorganisation situation well: the approach to planning implementation must match parameters dictated by the context; if these parameters are themselves contradictory, so the planning process will also embrace contradictions. Planning implementation of a complex change, like reorganisation, is bound to be a mixture of the rational and logical (as where it is possible to work out a critical path towards the reorganisation date), and the nonrational (as where adjustments have to be made to accommodate factors which could not have been predicted or controlled). With complex change it is notable that even the seemingly fixed points can turn out to be movable: in the pilot study, well advanced plans for implementing the entire set of LEA reorganisation proposals had to be postponed for a year because of central government ministers' delay in deciding whether to approve them.

What has a Beginning, a Middle, but no End?

The final characteristic of complexity refers to subsequent development in schools emerging from reorganisation (sequential component 9 - process). Evidence both from the pilot study and the present research suggests that, while implementation of LEA initiatives was technically complete immediately after the reorganisation date, implementing the establishment of new and merged schools had only just begun. Institutionalisation in terms of a new school in name and building did not necessarily imply institutionalisation in terms of creating constructive professional relationships, working practices, and a corporate culture and identity. *Institutionalisation of practice could take years, and there was no clear cut end to the process.*

In the first few months after reorganisation, the head of the new primary school formed from the first and middle schools attempted to accommodate the legacy of contrasting first and middle school staff cultures brought together in the merged institution. He empowered ex-middle school staff by agreeing to them arranging the curriculum, instruction and timetable for older pupils on formal lines as they had done previously in the middle school, and also empowered ex-first school staff by acceding to their wish to continue with more informal arrangements in line with their previous practice. This approach enabled members of each pre-merger institution to perpetuate their pre-merger cultures, but in the new school they now amounted to two partially incompatible subcultures. Tensions emerged where ex-first school staff taught in the upper part of the school and were faced with a tension between their preferred informal approach and the expectation of ex-middle school staff and the headteacher that they would operate much more formally. Three months after the merger, the issue had scarcely surfaced, let alone been addressed and resolved.

Practical Implications

We have identified and illustrated 14 characteristics of complexity exhibited by reorganisation initiatives, summarised in Table 4, which enabled us to cut through this complexity and reveal some of its underlying patterns. They appear to be sufficiently general to have some applicability to other complex changes in other national contexts, after allowing for the context specificity of reorganisation initiatives in the UK context of the mid 1990s. Further research is clearly needed to establish how far these characteristics might bear on other changes in other contexts, the degree to which they need modifying, and what additional characteristics should be added to the list.

(INSERT TABLE 4)

Complexity need not mean impenetrability, still less the impossibility of coping with it. The range of tasks to manage implementation of reorganisation is demonstrably specifiable, allowing detailed guidance to be developed for managers at different system levels which stands a good chance of enabling them to managing this change as effectively as possible. The kind of advice that is likely to prove useful must work in a situation where we have to assume that managers' awareness of its totality, let alone exclusive control over implementation, is impossible but, equally, that they may take steps to increase their awareness and control, albeit within limits. Despite the dynamic complexity of this change situation, the patterns detected do have practical implications for managers, such as:

- balancing an incremental and lock-step approach to implementation planning, while accepting the limited rationality of this combination;
- giving priority to optimising communication between system levels, while allowing for the inevitability of disjunction between perceptions at different levels and the likelihood of having to respond to the consequences;
- offering 'by the elbow' preparatory and ongoing support for key players - here headteachers, LEA officials and chairs of governing bodies - who are both change agents and users, so are on a steep learning curve;
- assuming that the change process is never complete - in the case of reorganisation initiatives being ready to provide medium term external support for staff in reorganised schools where individuals from different pre-reorganisation institutions are learning to work together and to settle their cultural differences;
- fostering a 'problem coping' (Louis and Miles 1990; Fullan 1993) approach to managing implementation, being on the look out for difficulties while acknowledging that the ability to resolve them is likely to be variable.

The form of this advice emphasises how managers can empower themselves up to a point, but that they must expect to live with the complexity that contradiction, paradox, uncertainty, limited control and frequent adjustment together bring. It flies in the face of much earlier prescription about managing change which has tended to assume that, as long as the right set of prescriptions can be found, it is feasible to find a simple way round complexity, and is more in tune with prescriptions emerging within the new paradigm for understanding change, such as Fullan's (1993) 'problems are our friends'.

Towards Reconceptualisation

In working towards a more sophisticated way of thinking about complex change, metaphors are required that embrace its partial, but very incomplete rationality and controllability. One promising metaphor for grasping complexity is the notion of a network, operating through parallel processing, like the human brain and new forms of artificial intelligence. Each person involved constitutes a node in the net, which is hierarchically organised into levels which correspond in our study with the main education system levels. There are more connections within than between these levels. Key players like the LEA area

education officer or headteachers represent nodes of the network at their particular level, with more links between other nodes than less knowledgeable players like teachers. The network operates without any single player representing a node with connections to all other nodes. There may be room to extend the connections between nodes through communication strategies of the kind we have discussed, but there is a limit to what can be done.

The coherence of reorganisation initiatives as an entity, readily apparent to an outsider, suggests that they are more than the sum of their parts. Yet the reorganisation process unfolds without any of the people who make up these parts being able to see the process in its entirety, let alone plan its every detail. The network metaphor captures well how people involved in managing complex change are interconnected and, if these connections are sufficient, they can work together to bring about coherent implementation. It also highlights the uncomfortable conclusion that, however hard people work to manage complex change, none of them will ever know exactly what they are all doing.

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Table 1: Main school sites and reorganisation arrangements

LEA	School (& governance)	summary of reorganisation arrangements
borough (schools are in same 'pyramid' of 7 first, 4 middle and 1 high school)	13-18 high, split site) (county) 9-13 middle (county)	one existing site closes, gains site of middle school which will close and become its 11-14 site. Gains 11-13 year old pupils from all closing middle schools to become 11-18 split site school
	4-9 first (county) 9-13 middle (county)	both schools close, merger on middle school site to form 4-11 primary. 11-13 year old pupils transfer to secondary school. First school site to be disposed of * reorganisation takes place over two years, with transfer of some pupils in 1996, completed in 1997
county (eastern area)	4-8 first (voluntary controlled) 4-8 first (voluntary controlled) 4-8 first (Roman Catholic) 8-12 middle (voluntary controlled)	all schools close, merger on middle school site to form 4-11 voluntary controlled primary, using one first school site as annexe. One voluntary controlled and the Roman Catholic first school sites to be disposed of
	4-8 first (county)	LEA proposal for merger but successful application of first school to become grant maintained 4-8 school, subsequently applied successfully to become 4-7 infant school
	8-12 middle (voluntary aided)	Middle school becomes 7-11 junior and remains under LEA control
(North eastern area)	4-8 first (voluntary controlled) 4-8 first (voluntary controlled)	both schools close, merger on one of the sites to form 4-11 voluntary controlled primary. Other site to be disposed of
(central area)	4-8 first (county) 4-8 first (voluntary controlled)	both schools close, merger on new site to form 4-11 voluntary aided primary. Other site to be disposed of, one being developed as an independent infant school
(southern area)	4-11 primary (county) 4-11 primary (voluntary controlled)	both schools close, merger on one site to form 4-11 voluntary controlled primary. Other site to be disposed of
	4-11 primary (voluntary controlled)	LEA proposal for merger but successful application for one school to become grant maintained.
	4-11 primary (voluntary controlled)	Other school remains under LEA control

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Table 2: One Headteacher's Major Tasks in Managing Reorganisation

CONSULTATION STAGE (APPROXIMATELY 2 YEARS)

- responding to LEA merger proposals, entailing liaison with governors and parents, lobbying and writing to LEA officials

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE (PRE-MERGER, APPROXIMATELY 1.5 YEARS)

Tasks concerned with first school

Staffing

- advising first school staff on their job and early retirement options

Building

- persuading LEA officials to board up all windows when the first school site was vacated

Furniture, Equipment and other Resources

- negotiating with middle school staff to release furniture and equipment needed for the additional year group of pupils staying on in the first school for its final year

Closure

- winding up the finances for the first school (eg preparing budget for audit, arranging transfer of parent-teachers assocation funds to the new school)
- negotiating with LEA officials for permission to close the first school to pupils three days early to provide time for packing and moving
- arranging ceremonies to mark the demise of the first school and retirement of some staff

Curriculum

- developing schemes of work (which would continue to be used in the new school)

Tasks concerned with the new school

Staffing

- applying for the post of headteacher designate of the proposed primary school
- designing a staffing and management structure
- contributing with governors to the appointment of the deputy headteacher, other teachers and support staff

Refurbishment

- o liaising with staff from the first and middle school and LEA officials about refurbishment priorities and monitoring progress
- o deciding on use of classrooms and specialist rooms, and so what fixed equipment should remain

Furniture, Equipment and other Resources

- o deciding, with staff, what was to be moved to the new primary school, taken to the LEA store, or discarded
- o arranging for the LEA library service to clean and catalogue books from the first and middle school
- o negotiating with the LEA officer responsible for moving furniture, equipment and other resources to the new school, and subsequently with the removal contractor

Routine Organisation

- o deciding, in consultation with staff and governors, on the length of the school day, the optional school uniform, and basic procedures (eg how pupils should behave when coming into school after the morning and afternoon break)
- o deciding to create a mixed age class (of two year groups of pupils, where the intake was insufficient to create full classes of one year group)
- o planning the programme for three staff in-service training days at the beginning of the term following reorganisation (when the school would be closed to pupils)

Budget

- o determining, with governors, the budget from the beginning of term following reorganisation to the end of the financial year (seven months)

INSTITUTIONALISATION (POST-MERGER, UNLIMITED PERIOD)

Building and Refurbishment

- o liaising with staff, builders and LEA officials over uncompleted work and repairing storm damage

School Development

- o developing school policies and a development plan
- o promoting good practice in the infant and junior department, drawing on experience of staff from the first and middle school respectively
- o facilitating staff learning to work together effectively

Table 3: The Area Education Officer's Major Tasks in Managing Reorganisation

(cross-level interaction is highlighted in **bold**)

CONSULTATION STAGE (FOR EACH PHASE OF REORGANISATION)

- **inviting union representatives for teaching and support staff to attend consultation meetings on LEA proposals**
- **attending consultation meetings for teaching staff, for support staff, and for parents and the local community to explain and receive feedback on LEA proposals**
- **writing to parents whose children would be affected by LEA proposals**

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE (FOR EACH PHASE OF REORGANISATION)

Reallocation of staff

- liaising closely with the senior education officer responsible for reallocation of staffing and with LEA inspectors over particular cases
- **providing guidance to headteachers and governors on parameters and procedures for appointments and early retirement**
- **gaining governors' commitment to supporting the LEA policy of avoiding compulsory redundancies by giving first consideration to staff displaced by reorganisation**
- **asking displaced teachers about their preferences for redeployment**
- **compiling lists of teaching posts which would become available at the point of reorganisation and arranging for their circulation throughout the LEA**
- **negotiating with headteachers and governors on behalf of displaced teachers by putting them forward as possible candidates for appointment, including as replacements for older staff who could then take early retirement**
- **counselling displaced staff about their anxiety over gaining redeployment**
- **attending governors' meetings to advise on employment issues**
- **attending staff employment interviews in an advisory capacity**
- **arranging for teachers who failed to find redeployment to be given supernumerary posts (employed by the LEA)**
- **liaising with central government officials over the consequences of a central government decision to alter early retirement conditions for early retirement agreements to which the LEA was already committed**
- liaising with members of the LEA education committee over appeals against enforced redundancy lodged by two teachers

Furniture, Equipment and other Resources

- **advising governors on procedures for moving furniture and equipment**
- **brokering, in response to conflict arising at school level, the equitable dispersal of furniture and equipment from closing schools**

Pupil Transfer

- **consulting headteachers about their preferred arrangement for transferring pupils from closing middle schools to neighbouring schools which would expand and negotiating an agreement**

Finance

- o liaising with LEA officers from the finance department to provide headteachers with an estimated first post-reorganisation budget to inform their planning
- o **providing governors with a written report which included likely implications for staffing**
- o liaising with other LEA officials to secure one-off 'transitional funding' provided from LEA sources to support schools due to expand under reorganisation

Headteacher Support

- o **attending regular mutual support meetings convened by headteachers**

Table 4: Characteristics of Reorganisation Initiatives as a Complex Change

Character of the Change

- o disparate management tasks and longer term changes in practice required for implementation, affecting users differently
- o sequential tasks, with alternation between process and event
- o phased implementation, so each phase is at a different stage at any time

Size of the Change

- o large number of people involved in or affected by implementation
- o people from different groups have varied specialist knowledge and priorities connected with their group interests
- o people from different groups have incompatible interests and individual with dual roles experience a personal conflict of interests
- o multiplicity of management tasks at each system level
- o evolving profile of simultaneous management tasks at different stages meant that managers had to juggle with several tasks at any time

Multiple System Levels Entailed in the Change

- o flow of interaction within and between system levels
  - with key individuals having specialist responsibilities to facilitate cross-level communication
  - but enduring disjunction between interpretations of actions by people at other levels
- o power dispersed within and between system levels, so individuals are mutually dependent and have limited control over each other, so efforts to find confluence of interests
- o individual knowledge of implementation was dispersed, so no individual had a complete picture

Interaction between the Change and other Policies

- o implementation affected by other policies, leading to incremental adjustments

Contradictory Elements of Planning to Implement the Change

- o planning was incremental, but within fixed and widely known parameters

Institutionalisation of the Change

- o institutionalisation gradual, lasting long after clear cut end of implementation